

REMARKS

The withdrawal of claims 12 to 15, 19 to 32 and 34, and the finality of the restriction requirement are acknowledged. Applicants respectfully submit, however, that should claim 1 be found allowable, all pending claims, save method claims 30 to 32 should be allowable as well.

Changes have been made in the specification and claims in a sincere attempt to place the case in immediate condition for allowance. The Examiner's comments regarding elements in the drawings not mentioned in the specification were noted and appropriate changes have been made in the latter. In this regard, applicants confirm that numeral 58 in Fig. 26 is the same as element 58 in Fig. 23. Other appropriate changes have been made in the specification to address all, save two, of the comments at page 4 of the Office Action. With respect to the disclosure at page 7, lines 4 to 8, the phrase "wall deformation (sine wave) deformations" means that the magnitude of the amplitude of the sine wave shaped wall deformations is smaller than the wall thickness. As to page 39, lines 8 to 22, the discussion is of a structure having a total of 14 cells, ten cells in one portion and four cells in the other, see Fig. 16.

The objections to the claims were noted and appropriate changes have been made. The same observation is made with respect to the rejections under the second paragraph of 35 USC 1.112. Claim 3 has been amended to make more clear what is claimed. Claim 1 has also been amended to include the features of now-canceled claim 2.

The rejection of claims 1 to 3, 6 to 10, and 16 under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by JP '580 is respectfully traversed. Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of the present claims is not taught by this reference. The relevant discussion in JP-'580 is believed to be found at paragraph 0013. An English translation of that paragraph is as follows:

[0013] [Means for solving the problems] In view of the above-mentioned, the present honeycomb structure is the one wherein the

outer peripheral walls of the tubular honeycomb structure having a plural number of the through channels are made straight both in the direction of the through channels and the vertical direction of the through channels, and the walls located at the central portion are made wave-like shapes which are synchronized each other in the direction of the through channels; said wave-like shaped walls being formed both in the direction of the through channels and the vertical direction of the through channels. Herein, the expression "being synchronized each other" means that the directions of the concave portions and convex portions of the respective wave-like shapes are the same each other (translator's remarks: please see Figs. 1 to 5 of the JP-'580).

Applicants also point out that there is no description in JP '580 regarding the position at which the intersection portions are formed. It is believed evident that the pitches of the ordinary dies used in the reference teaching are constant, meaning that the intersection portions in the honeycomb structure disclosed in JP '580 would not be formed at random or irregularly. The subject matter disclosed therein is not that of the instant claims. The rejection should be withdrawn.

The rejection of claims 1 to 4, 7, and 16 under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by JP '141 is also respectfully traversed.

JP '141 discloses the formation of a honeycomb structure having waved walls. The reference has no concrete description regarding the alignment of those waved walls. The reference, moreover, has no teaching or suggestion regarding a synchronization in the relation between the shapes of the waved walls disposed adjacent each other in the longitudinal direction of the honeycomb structure. It is believed that ordinary type dies having constant pitches were used to extrude the honeycomb structure of JP '141. A conventional type honeycomb structure was formed under the same conditions for those of the invention disclosed therein except that no pulling step or contracting step was used. Applicants state that they do not understand how the structure in the reference was contracted (or shrunken) from the discussion in the reference at

page 30, lower left column, lines 12 to 14. The Examiner is asked to compare Figs. 2 and 3 of the reference as it is believed that Fig. 2 was mislabeled and should be Fig. 1. The rejection should be withdrawn.

The rejection of claim 5 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over JP '141 in view of GB '640 and Maus et al. WO '876 is also respectfully traversed. The drawbacks of the primary reference have been discussed above and the secondary references do not contain teachings that would overcome those shortcomings.

The rejection of claims 6, 10, and 18 under 35 USC 103 over JP '141 in view of JP '784 is also respectfully traversed.

The deficiencies of JP '141 have been discussed above. The structure disclosed in JP '784 has walls with a wave-like shaped cross section only; see the discussion at column 3, lines 14 to 16. According to this passage, the cross section of each cell 2 is a hexagonal shape defined by waved plate-like wall 3 having a waved surface 5; see Figs. 1 and 3. In other words, the shape in the radial direction of the structure is waved, but there is no waved shape in the longitudinal direction. The claims patentably distinguish. The rejection should be withdrawn as well.

The rejection of claim 18 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over JP '580 in view of JP '784 is respectfully traversed. Both references and an explanation of how the references do not teach or suggest the invention as claimed have been discussed above.

The rejection of claims 11 and 17 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over either JP '580 or JP '141 in view of JP '784 and further in view of Abe et al. '119 is respectfully traversed. The Abe et al. '119 reference is cited to show wall thickness and porosity values in a honeycomb

structure. The reference, however, does not overcome that which is lacking in the other references and the rejection should be withdrawn as well.

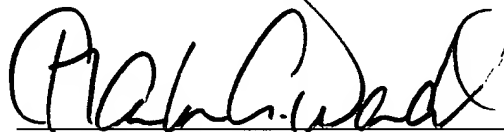
The Examiner is thanked for acknowledging receipt of certified copies from the International Bureau and for listing references provided with various Information Disclosure Statements.

In view of the foregoing revisions and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and a USPTO paper to those ends is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned if additional changes are required in the case prior to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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